

MEMORANDUM FOR

SUBJECT:

National Police Role in the Investigation of the
Murders of Six Jesuit Priests at the University
of Central America

C O R R E C T I O N

1. The following is a corrected version of this sensitive memorandum which was issued originally on 22 December 1989.

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

SECRET

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] 000000

3. In mid-November 1989, [REDACTED] said the National Police received orders from the presidential household to conduct a complete and honest investigation of the murders of six Jesuit priests and two other persons which occurred on 16 November 1989 at the University of Central America (UCA). [REDACTED] said senior police officials in turn ordered the National Police detective division to conduct a preliminary investigation of the murders and provide all necessary support to the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) investigation. [REDACTED] senior police officials are committed to solving the murders and bringing the guilty parties to justice, whether they are from the political right or left, or the military.

4. The National Police role has consisted of providing technical support to the SIU, including ballistic comparisons, fingerprint work and routine investigative procedures. [REDACTED] the National Police also conducted a preliminary investigation, which failed to turn up any physical evidence. The information gathered by the National Police investigation corresponded with that obtained by the SIU: the area surrounding the UCA campus was under the control of Salvadoran Armed Forces (ESAF) and security forces personnel; there was no guerrilla activity reported in the immediate area around the UCA on the night of the murders; and there were no abandoned or stolen vehicles left in the area to provide clues as to the authors of the crime.

5. [REDACTED] expressed his opinion that the ESAF was involved in the murders. He said he based this opinion on the fact there was apparently no guerrilla activity in the immediate area around the priests' residence prior to the murders, and that there was a heavy military presence in the area. He added, however, that while many in the National Police suspect ESAF participation in the murders, no proof exists to implicate the military in the crime.

6. This report is being shared with the Ambassador in San Salvador and the Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Forces Southcom. No further distribution will be made.

[REDACTED]

Deputy Director for Operations